



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
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# Press Release

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## **For Immediate Release:**

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### **Attorney General Darrell McGraw Awards \$500,000 In Funding To The University Of Charleston For The Implementation Of Its School Of Pharmacy.**

Attorney General Darrell McGraw today announced the distribution of \$500,000 (five hundred thousand dollars) to the University of Charleston for the funding of its new school of pharmacy program. This money comes from the latest installment in the \$10,000,000 settlement with Purdue Pharma, Inc. over the addictive qualities of the drug Oxycontin.

According to a spokesman for the University of Charleston the pharmacy school will begin classes in August. The first class will consist of around 75 students with an overall capacity for approximately 300 students after each class is filled over the next four years. As of this date, 250 applications for admittance to the program have been received from all over the country.

This addition to the University of Charleston curriculum will mean a steady flow into the West Virginia economy, of trained professionals who will earn an average starting salary of \$90,000 per year. Graduates who remain in West Virginia will not only increase the availability of qualified pharmacists for West Virginia's health care industry but create an infusion in the economy as a result of the creation of high paying jobs.

The new pharmacy program at the University of Charleston will strengthen the quality of health care in West Virginia, boost our economy and give West Virginia students another choice in their educational opportunities.

"In this day and age where medications have become such an integral part of health maintenance, it is important that society has the capacity to educate qualified pharmacists," McGraw stated. "While medications play an important role in adding to the quality of life for Americans, medications also present dangers when taken improperly. Pharmacists are on the front lines in educating consumers on the proper ways to use medications. Their role is becoming more and more vital to consumers and this funding is our way of returning our work product to the community. This funding will help promote the economy of West Virginia, improve health care and keep pharmacists in our state. It is also important to support the advancement of responsible pain management and prevent the exploitation of the positive qualities of pain management drugs. Proper education is an integral part of prevention," McGraw said.

Dr. Edwin H. Welch, President of the University of Charleston stated: "The University is very excited about the development of the School of Pharmacy and we're committed to the education of our graduates so that they're familiar with the drugs that they dispense," Dr. Welch said. "This will also help them educate the people who purchase medications, fulfilling the goal of the Attorney General to expand drug education across West Virginia."

Purdue Pharma agreed to pay West Virginia \$10 million over four years and this award came from the second installment of \$2.5 million.

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